AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION

Please replace the paragraph on page 2, lines 16-23 of the application with the following amended paragraph:

Public packet switched networks can be used to carry traffic to and from a mobile communications device (a mobile node), such as a mobile host, or router that changes its point of attachment from one network to another. The basic architecture of mobile IP data networking is known in the art and described in several publications, including the Request for Comments ("RFC") document RFC 2002 (1996) (hereinafter "RFC 2002"), which is currently available from the Internet Engineering Task Force ("IETF") at www.ietf.org for more information. Persons skilled in the art of mobile IP data networking are familiar with that document and devices used to implement mobile IP data networking in practice.

Please replace the paragraph on page 4, line 16 continuing onto page 5, line 11 of the application with the following amended paragraph:

The home agent 24 may be implemented on a router on the mobile node's home network 26. The home agent 24 maintains current location information data for the mobile node 10 such as foreign agent address, mobile home address and a secret key shared between the home agent and the mobile node. The home agent tunnels data from the target host 34 to the packet data serving node 18, and similarly provides tunneling services in the reverse direction. More information on point-to-point tunnels, such as a Layer 2 Tunneling Protocol ("L2TP") tunnel may be found in the RFC 2661, currently available at www.ietf.org which is available from IETF. The home agent 24, therefore, typically implements at least two distinct tasks for the

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mobile node 10. First, the home agent 24 performs a registration and authentication process to determine whether the mobile node 10 is authorized to access the home network 26. This may involve, for example, checking the identification of the mobile entity, such as through the use of the mobile entity's unique serial number or manufacturing number, password authentication, and possibly checking whether the mobile entity's account is current and paid. The home agent's registration and authentication function may be performed in conjunction with, or with the assistance of, a second device, such as an authentication, authorization and accounting server such as a Remote Authentication Dial-In User Service ("RADIUS") server. More information on a RADIUS server may be found on in the RFC-2138, ~~which is currently available at~~ ~~www.ietf.org for more information~~ which is available from IETF. As is known to those skilled in the art, the registration process includes receiving and processing registration request messages from the packet data serving node 18 and sending registration reply messages to the packet data serving node 18.

Please replace the paragraph on page 16, lines 15 continuing onto page 17, line 13 of the application with the following amended paragraph:

Further, the FACN 220 may keep a number of volatile records that are created during the operational stage of the FACN 220. For example, such records may be stored on the volatile memory unit 226A. The FACN 220 may maintain volatile PDSN profile records and volatile mobile node records. The FACN 220 creates PDSN profile records as the PDSNs report their presence in the network. The PDSN profile records are dynamically changed as PDSNs become inactive or as new PDSNs are added to the network. According to an embodiment of the present

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invention, PDSNs are arranged to provide their load status information via periodic messages, hereinafter referred to as heartbeat messages. Each PDSN is configured to periodically send, for example, its processing load factor, call load factor, and/or memory load factor to the FACN 220. For example, the processing load factor of a PDSN may be associated with the processing capacity of the PDSN, the call load factor may be associated with a number of calls that the PDSN is currently serving, and the memory load factor may be associated with memory resources, either available or used, on the PDSN. According to one embodiment of the present invention, the FACN 220 is configured via the CLI/SNMP interface ~~226~~ 228 with a number of threshold levels defining when a PDSN is no longer available for selection. For example, a call balance threshold may define a call level below which the PDSN may be selected to service new calls, independently of any call balancing mechanisms. In one embodiment, the FACN 220 may be automatically configured with a number of default threshold levels, such as, for example, 100% processing load, 100% memory load, and 4000 calls load level. In one embodiment, the FACN 220 may be configured with a number of thresholds that vary among the various PDSNs.